

POLICY STATEMENT 351 - PEER REVIEW

Approved by the Engineering Practice Policy Committee on March 17, 2016

Approved by the Policy Review Committee on May 13, 2016

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POLICY

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) promotes and supports the use of peer reviews for projects. Peer review is the practice of obtaining an independent, unbiased evaluation of the adequacy and application of engineering principles, standards and judgment from an independent group of professionals having substantial experience in the same field of expertise. Peer reviews are in addition to the normal quality control and checking procedures required on any engineering assignment.

ISSUE

Projects are expected to meet extremely rigid standards of performance. Peer review is a separate, important step in the design process for selected projects to provide an evaluation of design concepts and management to meet performance objectives. Peer reviews are recommended on projects:

That are critical or could endanger public health, safety, welfare, or the environment

Where reliability of performance under emergency conditions is paramount

When using innovative or untested materials, techniques, or design methods;

That could jeopardize national defense or security; or

That offer significant financial loss or incapacity to the investor.

Peer reviews should be initiated or requested by the owner/client or regulatory agency with full cooperation from the designer or consultant. Reviews address a defined scope as set forth by the initiating party. The number and timing of peer reviews vary by project. Reviews normally should occur before critical decisions or criteria are adopted as well as prior to the completion or release of contract documents.

Peer reviews should be performed by independent or external professionals not associated with or accountable to the original design team.

RATIONALE

Quality Control and checking of engineering project deliverables is an important but separate process normally undertaken by the designer, associated team members and organizations. Peer review can add a measure of increased confidence to the designer or consultant.

ASCE Policy Statement 351

First Approved in 1989

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